

**From:** Craig Sullivan [mailto:craigs@countysupervisors.org]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 13, 2011 3:08 PM  
**To:** State Exec's  
**Subject:** Coordination Legislation

All,

Arizona saw a bill virtually identical to Montana's pass through the legislative process last year. It passed on party-line votes out of both chambers. A copy of the bill is attached.

According to conversations we've had with county supervisors, this legislation has had little or no impact on the willingness or unwillingness of federal agencies to work with counties. Many of our counties have already worked very closely with federal agencies on programs that directly impact their constituents. The legislation adopted last year did not compel anyone to work together who had not been doing so already.

The biggest impact of the legislation, unfortunately, has been the impression it created among rural county residents that their supervisors could now demand coordination and thereby influence or even prevent the implementation of federal programs with which they disagree. For example, many residents of Greenlee County are now under the impression that the County could, if its supervisors decided, force an end to the Mexican Wolf Recovery Program, a hugely unpopular U.S. Fish and Wildlife activity in that county. As a result of the legislation, several county supervisors who have diligently worked for years with Fish and Wildlife to mitigate the impact of the program now find themselves accused of not "coordinating" and ending the program. The supervisors are now, in some cases, being blamed for the program's ongoing existence.

Likewise, supervisors in Navajo County have been accused of failing to use the coordination tool to halt Forest Service implementation of travel management plans that restrict public access to the forest, in spite of having spent the last three years working closely with the Forest Service in a successful effort to maximize public access under the new plans.

The feeling among all of these supervisors is that the law was unnecessary; that they were already coordinating with the federal counterparts and will continue to coordinate. When these supervisors report this to their constituents, they are often told that they are not coordinating "the right way" since they have not ended the program or forced the county's position on the federal agency.

To summarize, the legislation has not improved federal agencies' cooperation with Arizona counties and has not resulted in any litigation against a county, but has unfairly raised public expectations that county supervisors can impose their will on federal agencies and thus influence or end unpopular federal programs.

These expectations are a significant and frustrating challenge for county supervisors who, in fact, have successfully coordinated on behalf of their constituents for many years.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Craig

Craig A. Sullivan  
Executive Director  
County Supervisors Association of Arizona  
1905 W. Washington St. Suite 100  
Phoenix, Arizona 85009  
Office: (602) 452-4500  
Cell: (602) 909-1921